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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/070,284	07/12/2002	Kenshu Shimada	09812.0438	3062
22852	7590	02/28/2007		
FINNEGAN, HENDERSON, FARABOW, GARRETT & DUNNER LLP 901 NEW YORK AVENUE, NW WASHINGTON, DC 20001-4413			EXAMINER HAQ, NAEEM U	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3625	

SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE	MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
3 MONTHS	02/28/2007	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/070,284

Applicant(s)

SHIMADA, KENSHU

Examiner

Naeem Haq

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 09 November 2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1 and 3-55 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 15-55 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, and 14 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

This action is in response to the Applicant's amendment filed on November 9, 2006. Claims 1 and 3-55 are pending. Claims 5, 7, 10, 13, and 15-55 were withdrawn in a previous Office Action and remain withdrawn. Claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, and 14 will be considered for examination.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 1 is directed to an "apparatus", however, this claim has no physical structure as per the analysis given below in the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 101. Therefore, it is unclear the Examiner how a series of programs can constitute an "apparatus". The dependent claims are rejected under a similar rationale.

Final Rejection

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

Claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter.

Claim 1 is directed to an "apparatus". This "apparatus" has four components: (1) an order information acquisition means, (2) a candidate determining means, (3) a related commodity information transmission means, and (4) a commodity shipping command means. The Applicant's specification discloses that the "order information acquisition means" is a program (see page 17, line 14 – page 18, line 2). The specification also discloses that the "related commodity information transmission means" and the "commodity shipping command means" are programs (see page 29, lines 15-20; page 18, lines 3-5; page 26, lines 2-4). Thus, the "apparatus" of claim 1 comprises a series of programs. The Examiner notes that a program is not a physical structure, and therefore the "apparatus" of claim 1 has no physical structure. For this reason, claim 1 is deemed to be non-statutory subject matter. The dependent claims 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, and 14 do not correct this problem and are rejected under same rationale.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

Claims 1, 3, 6, 8, 9, 12, and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Henson (US 6,167,383).

Referring to claim 1: Henson teaches a commodity selling apparatus for accepting an order of a commodity responsive to a request by a customer to purchase the commodity over a network and for directly shipping the ordered commodity to said customer, comprising:

- order information acquisition means for acquiring the order information, prepared on accepting the request to purchase the commodity from the customer, over the network and commodity shipping command means for commanding the shipping of the commodity ordered to said customer based on said order information acquired by said order information acquisition means (see at least Abstract, col. 1, lines 60 – 63; col. 3, lines 31 - 32 and Figures 1 , 2 and 3C);
- proposed-order determining means for determining a proposed order including a list of one or more related commodities determined to be connectable to the commodity based on related commodity information associated with the commodity (col. 9, lines 1-8; col. 9, lines 56-60; col. 10, lines 7-15). The Applicant's specification discloses that term "related commodity" is a commodity "...that can be connected to a specified commodity by at least one of the direct connection, wireless connection, removable connection, internal mounting and indirect loading." (see

specification page 57, lines 7-10). Henson teaches recommending an add-on, upgrade, or a cross-sell based on the contents of the shopping cart. These add-ons and upgrades can be hardware or software that require a direct connection and/or loading.

- related commodity information transmission means for transmitting the proposed order over the network and wherein the order information acquisition means acquires the order information over the network following transmission of the proposed order by the related commodity information transmission means (Abstract and Figures 1, 2 and col. 3, lines 45 - 54);

For Examination purposes, "sales store" was treated as equivalent to separate virtual stores for each customer (see col. 14, lines 35 - 61). Finally as noted above, the use of these words/phrase maybe a result of translation, which hampers the determining the metes and bounds of the claims.

Referring to claim 3: Henson teaches a commodity selling apparatus wherein said related commodity information transmission means includes delivery term presenting means for presenting the term of delivery of the commodity and the quantity of possible orders under said term of delivery, in a confirmable form, responsive to a request from a sale store, to said sale store over said network; said order information acquisition means acquiring, from said sale store, the order information prepared on accepting the request to purchase the commodity from the customer in accordance with a delivery term presented by said delivery term presenting means, over said network; said commodity shipping command means commanding the shipping to said customer

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of the commodity booked on the basis of the order information acquired by said order information acquisition means, within the term of delivery presented by said delivery term presenting means (col. 7, lines 1 - 21 and Figure 9).

Referring to claim 6: Henson teaches a commodity selling apparatus wherein said order information acquisition means acquiring the information specifying a commodity as the order information and the information pertinent to the shipping destination of said commodity; said commodity shipping command means transmitting the information pertinent to the shipping destination of said commodity along with a command for shipping the booked community (Figure 9).

Referring to claim 8: Henson teaches a commodity selling apparatus wherein said related commodity information transmission means including delivery term presenting means for presenting the term of delivery of a commodity and the quantity of possible orders under said delivery term in a confirmable form to a booking terminal connected over a network to said related commodity information transmission means responsive to a request from said booking terminal (Figure 9);

said order information acquisition means acquiring from said booking terminal the order information formulated on the basis of the request by a customer to purchase a commodity under a term of delivery presented by said delivery term presenting means (Figure 9);

said commodity shipping command means commanding the shipping of the booked commodity to said customer within the term of delivery presented by said

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delivery term presenting means, based on the order information acquired by said order information acquisition means (Abstract and Figure 9).

Referring to claim 9: Henson teaches a commodity selling apparatus according wherein said commodity is formed by a plurality of individual commodities (Figure 3A); said related commodity information transmission means including delivery term presenting means for presenting, responsive to a request from a sale store, the term of delivery of said individual commodities and the quantity of possible orders under said delivery term in a confirmable form to said sale store (Figure 9); said order information acquisition means acquiring from said sale store the order information formulated on the basis of the request from a customer to purchase the commodity under the term of delivery presented by said delivery term presenting means (Abstract and Figure 9); said commodity shipping command means commanding the booked commodity to be shipped to said customer within the term of delivery presented by said delivery term presenting means on the basis of the order information acquired by said order information acquisition means (Figure 9).

Referring to claim 12: Henson teaches a commodity selling apparatus according wherein said order information acquisition means acquires the information specifying the individual commodity forming a commodity as the order information and the information pertinent to the shipping destination of said commodity; said commodity shipping command means transmitting the information pertinent to the shipping destination of said commodity along with a shipping command for the booked commodity (Figure 9).

Referring to claim 14: Henson teaches a commodity selling apparatus wherein said commodity is formed by a plurality of individual commodities; said related commodity information transmission means including delivery term presenting means for presenting, responsive to a request from a booking terminal connected over a network, the term of delivery of said individual commodities and the quantity of possible orders under said delivery term, in a confirmable form to said sale store; said order information acquisition means acquiring from said booking terminal the order information formulated on the basis of the request accepted from a customer to purchase the commodity under the term of delivery presented by said delivery term presenting means; said commodity shipment command means commanding the booked commodity to be shipped to said customer within the term of delivery presented by said delivery term presenting means on the basis of the order information acquired by said order information acquisition means (Figure 3A and Figure 9).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

Claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Henson (US 6,167,383) in view of Bellini (US 5,974,395).

Henson substantially discloses and teaches the Applicant's invention. Henson does not specially disclose and teach a commodity selling apparatus further comprising: production quantity acquisition means for acquiring the total production quantity per

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preset period of time of respective commodities, produced in accordance with a production schedule drafted under a preset production schedule sequence; said delivery term presenting means presenting the delivery term as said preset period of time, with an unbooked fraction of the total production quantity during said preset time period as the quantity of possible orders. However, Bellini teaches a commodity selling apparatus further comprising: production quantity acquisition means for acquiring the total production quantity per preset period of time of respective commodities, produced in accordance with a production schedule drafted under a preset production schedule sequence; said delivery term presenting means presenting the delivery term as said preset period of time, with an unbooked fraction of the total production quantity during said preset time period as the quantity of possible orders (Abstract; col. 2, lines 55 – 67; col. 3, lines 9 – 15; col. 5, lines 36 – 59; and Figure 2). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to incorporate the teachings of Bellini into the apparatus of Henson. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so in order ensure the timely production and delivery of products.

Claim 11 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Henson (US 6,167,383) in view of Kennedy (US 6,188,989 B1).

Henson substantially discloses and teaches the Applicant's invention. Henson does not specifically disclose and teach a commodity selling apparatus according further comprising: production quantity acquisition means for acquiring the total production quantity per preset time period for each individual commodity produced in

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accordance with a production schedule drafted under a preset production schedule sequence; and sale quantity allocation means for deciding an allocation quantity to each sale store corresponding to a fraction of the total production quantity per preset time period as obtained by said production quantity acquisition means; said delivery term presenting means presenting said preset time period as the term of delivery, with an unbooked fraction of said allocation quantity to the sale store which has made said purchase request, as the quantity of possible orders during said preset time period, in a confirmable form to said sale store. However, Kennedy teaches a commodity selling apparatus according further comprising: production quantity acquisition means for acquiring the total production quantity per preset time period for each individual commodity produced in accordance with a production schedule drafted under a preset production schedule sequence', and sale quantity allocation means for deciding an allocation quantity to each sale store corresponding to a fraction of the total production quantity per preset time period as obtained by said production quantity acquisition means; said delivery term presenting means presenting said preset time period as the term of delivery, with an unbooked fraction of said allocation quantity to the sale store which has made said purchase request, as the quantity of possible orders during said preset time period, in a confirmable form to said sale store (Abstract, col. 2, lines 37-45; col. 3, lines 35-41; col. 15, lines 38 - 46). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to incorporate the teachings of Kennedy into the apparatus of Henson. One of ordinary skill in the art would have been motivated to do so in order ensure the timely production and delivery of products.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to the rejection of claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, and 14 under 35 U.S.C. 101 and 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, have fully considered but they are not persuasive. Claim 1 fails to recite any physical structure to constitute an "apparatus". Therefore, this claim is deemed to be non-statutory.

Applicant's arguments with respect to the art rejection of claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, and 14 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. The Applicant has argued that Henson does not disclose the limitation "proposed-order determining means for determining a proposed order including a list of one or more related commodities determined to be connectable to the commodity based on related commodity information associated with the commodity." The examiner respectfully disagrees. Henson discloses an apparatus that allows a user to configure a product. The apparatus displays lists of components that can be added to the product. These lists are presented in the form of pull down menus (Figs. 3A, 3B, and 4). Henson also discloses a validation unit (Fig. 1, "34") that validates a configuration for compatibility. Furthermore, Henson discloses that the validation unit has the ability to disable certain options in the pull down menu if the options are not compatible with a previously selected option by the user (col. 9, lines 1-8). For this reason, the examiner maintains the art rejection.

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Naeem Haq whose telephone number is (571)-272-6758. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8:00am-5:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jeffrey A. Smith can be reached on (571)-272-6763. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Naeem Haq', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Naeem Haq, Primary Examiner
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February 5, 2007